



Drought Disaster Frequently Asked Questions

Wisconsin Farm Service Agency

Adverse weather conditions across the state and the ending of the disaster assistance programs in the 2008 Farm Bill has created numerous questions for producers potentially facing crop or livestock losses.

These frequently asked questions will provide some information producers with current or pending losses due to the current adverse weather conditions. For additional questions, producers are encouraged to contact their local USDA Service Center.

Producers need to also report all cropland and pastureland, even if they are not participating in other FSA programs as previous disaster assistance programs required producers to file crop reports to qualify.

What does the drought status mean to me?

The current drought status for an area determines what additional resources may become available to producers.

How do I know what the current drought status is in my area of the state?

The Drought Monitor provides the status of the drought across the state on a weekly basis. This tool can be accessed at <http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>.

Are there any disaster programs available right now?

At this time, there are no disaster programs available to producers. In the 2008 Farm Bill, disaster legislation was passed which included the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments Program (SURE), Livestock Forage Program (LFP), Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP), and the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-raised Fish Program (ELAP). Unfortunately, these programs ended with the 2011 crop year on September 30, 2011. This does not mean that these programs may be renewed in the 2012 Farm Bill. Please keep in mind that discussions are currently underway regarding the 2012 Farm Bill. The Secretary of Agriculture is aware of the importance of the situation. Please continue to watch the FSA website for information.

I understand that there is currently no disaster assistance programs, but is there anything available to help producers at this time?

The first step that needs to take place is a disaster declaration. If counties receive a Secretarial or

Presidential disaster declaration, low interest farm emergency loans would become available to producers with production losses. For more information on emergency loans, visit:

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/frmapp>

What should I do if I don't have crop insurance?

Producers without crop insurance should consider filing a crop report with their local county FSA. There are currently no fees for late filing crop reports. In addition to filing a crop report, producers need to document crop losses (reference FSA's Disaster Assistance Program Loss Documentation Fact Sheet for more information).



Has Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) ground been opened up for haying or grazing?

Managed haying or grazing MAY be an option for qualifying producers. However, CRP ground cannot be hayed or grazed until AFTER the primary nesting season ends at midnight on August 1. Producers interested in learning if they qualify for managed haying or grazing need to contact their local USDA Service Center or visit the FSA website at www.fsa.usda.gov. Please note that producers MUST contact the county office to obtain guidance and fill out appropriate paperwork BEFORE doing anything on CRP acres.

Will Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) ground be opened up for emergency haying or grazing?

If USDA requirements are met by a county, emergency grazing may become available before August 2nd. Emergency haying will never be approved prior to August 2nd.

Counties are currently in the process of reviewing data and requesting eligibility for CRP for potential

emergency haying and grazing. Please note that producers MUST contact the county office to obtain guidance and fill out appropriate paperwork BEFORE doing anything on CRP acres.

What do I do if I have NAP (Non-insured Assistance Program)?

The Non-insured Assistance Program (NAP) provides financial assistance to producers of noninsurable crops when low yields, loss of inventory or prevented planting occur due to a natural disaster. This program functions similarly to private crop insurance, but covers crops that crop insurance does not. For 2012, crops to be eligible for NAP, insurance had to be purchased by May 15, 2012 for spring-seeded crops.

If producers have a crop covered by NAP that appears affected by disaster, producers must notify the FSA office and complete a Notice of Loss Form, CCC-576. This must be completed within 15 calendar days of which ever occurs earlier:

- Natural disaster occurrence;
- Final planting date if planting was prevented by a natural disaster;
- Date damage to the crop or loss of production became apparent;
- The normal harvest date.

What do I do if I am going to start chopping?

Producers who plan to either harvest or destroy crops affected by disaster, need to contact their crop insurance agent BEFORE doing anything. Agents will instruct producers as to the steps that need to be taken to maintain eligibility for crop insurance.

If producers do not have crop insurance, records and documentation of production must be kept in the event of the implementation of future disaster assistance programs. Producers need to also have a complete and accurate acreage report filed with the local USDA Service Center. Crop reports should include all crops planted after the initial crop.

If I plant subsequent crops, such as emergency forages, should I update my crop reports with FSA?

Yes. The planting of subsequent crops requires producers to update crop reports to ensure FSA has complete crop reports on file.

What should I do now?

The most important thing producers can do at this point is to maintain accurate and detailed documentation of production and loss. Producers need to track any acres lost or harvested. If harvesting anything including hay, corn, beans, etc,

producers need to keep track of production from the field. Documentation is vital to ensure producers the opportunity to participate in any new or continues disaster assistance programs that may be authorized in the 2012 Farm Bill.

Producers carrying crop insurance need to stay in regular contact with their agent so that the agents may provide assistance to ensure producers maintain eligibility for insurance coverage.

Is there any other information available?

UW-Extension has a page devoted to information for handling drought:

<http://fyi.uwex.edu/drought2012/>

Please continue to watch various newspapers and websites for information as it is changing daily.

Additional Information

As always, producers are encouraged to report all cropland and pastureland in addition to maintaining documentation of losses. Producers who do not market crops nor have appraisals performed should be keeping contemporaneous records of production. Changes may occur to the reporting and documentation with the passage of the new Farm Bill, but by reporting crops and maintaining quality documentation, producers may be able to meet the proper reporting and documentation requirements for any new disaster assistance programs implemented.

Producers are also encouraged to report crop conditions to their county FSA office so that the information may be used to support the potential request for disaster declarations.

For more information or questions about disaster assistance programs, contact the local USDA Service Center or visit www.fsa.usda.gov.

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